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THE GALLANT WAY

BY
FRANK TAYLOR



England, awakel and be thyself once more—
The land of chivalry that Shakespeare owned
When faith and honour gave thee righteous power,
And saw thee on the Ocean-world enthroned.

Nawab Nizamat Jung Bahadur, K.C.I.E.
"Occasional Poems (1911-1938)" p. 24.

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THIS BOOK

THE best* in the British martial tradition has often been dumb or taken for granted: Frank Taylor's *Gallant Way* gives it eloquent expression. His complete identity with the soul or the cause to which he is lending his powers of utterance will astonish those who do not know his standard work *The Wars of Marlborough*, with its many fascinatingly fresh, apparently first hand, appendices and notes.†

The genuineness of the voices gathered here, as well as Frank Taylor's craftsmanship, preclude the possibility that they can become out of date. The opinion of the intellectual socialites, whose praise and anathema are tossed to and fro by the winds of Fashion, matters not at all to those whose readiness to fight in defence of their country and its honour, at whatever disadvantage, gives to these irresponsibles their sheltered playground. *The Gallant Way* should be always available to our countrymen as well as to

* A demonstration of this best by the Bombay Army is described in Sir Hugh Rose's General Order to the Central Indian Force, May 1858:—

"In hardships, in temptations, in dangers, you have never left your ranks. You have fought against the strong and you have protected the rights of the weak and defenceless, of foes as well as of friends. I have seen you in the ardour of combat preserve and place children out of harm's way. This is the discipline of Christian soldiers, and it is this which has brought you triumphant from the shores of Western India to the borders of the Jumna"—and, we may add, Sir Hugh Rose's own supreme qualities of leadership. His campaign continued through the hot weather in Central India. He became Field-Marshal Lord Strathnairn; and Lord Birdwood can remember him, handsome and dandified as ever, despite his age, Colonel of the Royal Horse Guards, escorting Queen Victoria at a Royal Ball some 20 years later.

† "*The Wars of Marlborough*" by Frank Taylor. 2 Vols. Blackwell, Oxford: 1917; still in steady demand. He died quite young in 1913, and this fascinating text-book was brought out for him posthumously by his sister.

Frank Taylor must have regretted that he was not a soldier, so great is his sympathy with the strength and gentleness of good men of action, and his understanding of military affairs.

our Brothers in any land, who wish to understand this deep and strong, though least vocal, element in our character.

It is against our "right gallant way" of conduct that the rogues and triflers-with-the-sacred have ultimately to come. If they recognised this in time they might forgo their provocative follies, and save mankind much damage. ["How shall the stranger learn?" p. 38.]

Therefore the fact that John Murray's 1st edition of this book is now hard to obtain makes reprinting necessary.

Let this edition be additionally dedicated to those, whom the Reader knows personally, whose unconscious excellence and willing sacrifice are still further adorning our graceful Martial Heritage, and making it more potent to touch and inspire him if he will only examine it.

March, 1944.

P R E F A C E

OF the twenty-three poems included in this collection, seven appeared originally in the *Spectator*, six in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, five in the old *St. James's Gazette*, and one each in the *United Service Magazine*, the *Academy*, the *Daily Express*, the *Evening News*, and *Oxford Verse*. In reproducing them here, I desire to acknowledge the courtesy of the Editors concerned, and of Mr. Blackwell of Oxford.

At the request of Lieutenant-Colonel de Winton, "Minden Drums" was set to music as a marching tune for the use of the 1st Battalion of the Hampshire Regiment by the former bandmaster, Mr. H. Pearce.

"Minden Drums" has also been reprinted in the *Lancashire Fusiliers' Annual* and the journals of the Suffolk and Hampshire Regiments, and "Audenarde" in the *Household Brigade Magazine* and the journal of the East Yorkshire Regiment.

FRANK TAYLOR.

December, 1912.

TO
FIELD-MARSHAL THE EARL ROBERTS
OF KANDAHAR, PRETORIA, AND WATERFORD,
COLONEL-COMMANDANT OF THE ROYAL ARTILLERY,
V.C., K.G.,

THIS BOOK IS, BY PERMISSION, DEDICATED, IN THE
SINCERE HOPE THAT IT MAY, IN SOME DEGREE, HOW-
EVER SLIGHT, CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONSUMMATION OF
THAT SUPREME TASK TO WHICH, IN THESE LAST DAYS,
HE HAS SET HIS HAND.

During the first decade and a half of this century Lord Roberts devoted the energies of his heart and mind and body to the conduct of a campaign to warn Great Britain of the threatening plans of the Pan-German League, and of the folly of unpreparedness in face of them.

To a student of our history like Frank Taylor, the urgency of this warning was fully known.

By this dedication in (1912) he acclaims the selfless hero, strenuously labouring in his last years, despite the jibes of lesser men, to save his country from having to face unarmed the impending attack.

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AND the soul of England, they thought it dust,
And the sword of England, they thought it but rust,—
What will they think of it, what will they say of it,
Lord ! when I tell them the right gallant way of it ?

of John (Churchill) Duke of Marlborough's Victory at Blenheim 1704.

We have become the sole champions now in arms to defend
the world cause.

The King's First Minister June 17th 1940.

...all the...Dominions...are absolutely devoted to the
ancient Motherland, and feel themselves inspired by the same
emotions which lead me to stake our all upon duty and honour.

The King's First Minister June 18th 1940.

SAINT GEORGE

DUMBLY their plumage fans the gale,
With silent gold their steeds are shod,
Who noiseless ride in mystic mail,
The immortal chivalry of God;
Each in his office is not slow
To wage the spiritual war,
Nor least, where'er the English go,
The good Saint George goes on before.

Staunch warriors of the Cross would tell
How, battling under Syrian skies,
As he on whom the mantle fell,
They saw the world with stronger eyes;
They saw the Saint in arms of light,
With steed of fire and lance of flame;
They saw, and kindling at the sight,
Hurled back the heathen in his name.

This was the name that greatly rang,
When England greatly stood at bay,
And blithe the English bow-string sang
On Cressy slope that August day;
This was the flag that danced and flew
Exultant o'er the plunging main,
When them we spared the storm-wind slew,
And England smote the pride of Spain.

And wherefore not ? Let him deride
Whose soul with coarser sense is blurred;
But England loves that unseen guide,
Sent forth to work his Master's word,
Who sleeplessly by land and wave
Hath kept her and shall keep her thus,
Strong servant of the God who gave
His angels charge concerning us.

AT CRESSY

(*August 26*)

It is so still where sleeps the little town,
White in its woods, and on the easy hill,
Drab with crisp stubble, where one crooked clown
Reaps the last ridge of gold, it is so still,

That clear across five centuries of time,
As I lie here, the very silence wafts
The surge of hoofs, the clangour and the chime,
The splash and patter of the swishing shafts,

Screech of hit horses, trumpets, curses, sobs
Of souls stamped out along the red, wet clay,
Deep calling unto deep in thunder throbs,
“St. George, St. George for England !” Happy
they

Which say, “Our forefather, by this brown scroll,
(The good knight yonder in the chapel dim),
Rode with the Black Prince.” Aye, God rest his
soul !

But I would give the good knight, and with him,

Five centuries of knighthood, sire and son,
Blazon and brass and branching tree, to know
That I could claim one blood-drop drawn from one,
The meanest there that bent the English bow.

THE TALBOT COMETH

"This man was to the French people, a very scourge and a daily terror, in so much that as his person was fearfull, and terrible to his adversaries present: so his name and fame was spitefull and dreadfull to the common people absent, in so much that women in Fraunce to feare their yong childre, would crye, the Talbot commeth, the Talbot commeth."—HALL'S CHRONICLE.

"Being victorious for twenty-four years together, successe failed him at last, charging the Enemy neer Castilion on unequal termes, where he, with his Son the Lord Lisle, were slain with a shot, July, 1453. Henceforward we may say 'Goodnight to the English in France,' whose victories were buried with the body of this Earl, and his body entered at White-Church in this County" (Shropshire).—Thomas Fuller: THE HISTORY OF THE WORTHIES OF ENGLAND.

WILD South-Western, piping shrill,
Sad and dreadful trumpeter,
Waters, rolling hill on hill,
Higher yet as sinks Honfleur,
Slash the canvas, snap the gear,
Let the steep decks swim with foam;
Naught have we hope or fear,—
This is Talbot's coming home.

Master Mayor of Hampton Town,
Toll your bells in every tower;
Let the crimson cross go down;
Now is England's passing hour;
Let the golden leopards fall,—
Fallen low is England's Crown;
Bid them strike the topsails tall,
Master Mayor of Hampton Town.

Frenchmen, quit your warlike bands,
Plough and sow the Picard plain,
Plant the Norman apple-lands,
Plant the vineyards of Touraine;
Loiter now in ladies' bowers,
Safely rest and blithely roam;
Now ye need nor gates nor towers,—
This is Talbot's coming home.

Bowmen, back from lost Guienne,
Softly treading, two by two,
Shropshire bowmen, Whitchurch men
Bear him, as he bade you do,
On through every weeping shire,
Home to Whitchurch, home, and then
Lay him in St. Alkmund's choir,
Bowmen, back from lost Guienne.

Shrewsbury, Wexford, Waterford,
Falconbridge and Furnivall,
Lord of Worksop, Wingfield's Lord,
And of France a marischal,
Goodrich, Alton, and Blackmere,
In his well-loved Shropshire loam,
Shropshire bowmen, lay him here,—
This is Talbot's coming home.

CAVALIERS, COME AWAY

COME, you courtiers, from your drinking, and the beds
where you lie blinking,
Come, you gownsmen, from your thinking, and you
gamesters from your play;
They are out, the fell fanatics, they are out, the false
schismatics,
And King Charles's trumpet's calling,—
Cavaliers, come away.

From your dice and ale-house benches, from your
wineskins and your wenches,
To the bastions and the trenches, to the foray and
the fray;
From the white arms that enfold you, from the baby
hands that hold you,
Can't you hear the trumpet calling ?—
Cavaliers, come away.

They have pikes to point their ranting, they have guns
to back their canting,
And while you go here gallanting, they are out to
spoil and slay;
For the faith that you were born to, for the King that
you have sworn to,
Can't you hear the trumpet calling ?—
Cavaliers, come away.

RAGLAN

FOUL are thy founts, low levelled are thy bowers,
Dumb grass hath muffled every court and stair,
Thy holy place lies desecrate and bare,
And burned with fire from hell; chill, pelting showers
Drive down thy roofless halls; the rude wind scours
Where kings have slept oblivious, and where
The sweet mass floated on the fragrant air,—
So dire a wave of war hath topped thy towers,
Shearing their airy coronal. But they,
Whose desperate valour kept thee then, and he,
Who scorned to change or fear* in that wild day,
Not their's, not his the fate that waits on thee :
Not silence, desolation, and decay,
But fame, affection, immortality.

* *Mutare vel timere sperno*—the motto of the Duke of Beaufort.

DORISLAUS DEAD

Isaac Dorislaus, a lawyer of Dutch birth, long resident in England, was employed in the preparation of the case against Charles I. Having been shortly afterwards despatched as special envoy to the United Provinces, he was murdered while at supper in the public room of his inn by a party of English cavaliers. Carlisle has this notice of him: "Dr. Dorislaus, by birth Dutch; appointed Judge-Advocate at the beginning of Essex's campaignings; known afterwards on the king's trial; and finally, for that latter service, assassinated at the Hague, one evening, by certain high-flying Royalist cut-throats, Scotch several of them." In Evelyn's Diary, under date June 13, 1649, it is written: "This night was buried with great pomp Dorislaus, slaine at the Hague, the villain who manag'd the trial against his sacred Majesty." A similar fate overtook Anthony Ascham, the Parliament's envoy at Madrid. In the following poem one of the murderers of Dorislaus, being rebuked by members of his own faction, makes his defence.

PITY ? What pity ? He got at the last
Such pity as he and his like have shown
To us and to all that have holden fast
By our fathers' God and the ancient throne.

If ye be of us, (and I know ye be),
Give thanks that your eyes are not grown more
grim,
That ye still have pity; but answer me,
If ye be of us, why ye pity him.

With the blood of the King his hands were wet;
Warm from that slaughter he fell to our sword;
He hath paid his life to the standing debt
For the sacred life of our Sovereign Lord.

He drudged for the traitors, he shared their task,
And he served them here, he talked in their place;
'Tis as though he had worn the headsman's mask,
As though he had spat in the martyr's face.

Perchance had we sat with our naked swords,
And chattered a little about the past,
While one made ready with pulleys and cords,*
When the play was ended, to bind him fast;

Had we finished our work with butcher's tools,
And brandished the blood-dripping head on high,
Had the thing been done according to rules,
Perchance ye would never have asked us why.

But I, who am proud to have struck this stroke,
I fancy that justice and law are things
Too sacred to make an assassin's cloak,
Be they subjects we kill or sceptred kings.

For I, if I hunger to kill a man,
I do not hale him to Westminster Hall;
I cut his throat like a sheep, if I can,
Or else he cuts mine for me,—that is all.

Ye say it was murder; I am not awed,
Only fools start at the sound of a name,
But the thing they did to Strafford and Laud,
However men called it, I do the same;

The thing they did to my master and yours,
I did the same to this creature of theirs;
Murder? Maybe,—I was bred to the wars,
I am no schoolman to split you such hairs.

* "Staples were therefore hammered into the floor of the scaffold to afford a purchase for ropes, by aid of which, if any resistance were offered, the King could be forced down into the prone attitude in which victims were at that time beheaded."—S. R. Gardiner.

However men call it, 'tis life for life,
And lives not a few for the King my Lord;
Only they work with the gallows and knife,
I, lacking a hangman, must use my sword.

I will plead in the Courts of Charles my King,
I will meet my God when I come to die,
But long as I carry a sword to swing
And a wrist uncut and a seeing eye,

I will do justice and judgment on these,
Such justice and judgment as they have done,
Who bow to no law save the sword's decrees,
The might of the many against the one.

I am no stabber for love of the trade,
To slit you a throat in the dark for gold;
If the game of killing must needs be played,
I should choose to play on an English wold,

On an English wold in the free, fresh air,
To the rush of hoofs and the trumpet's ring,—
But what odds if I play it here or there,
So long as I kill them who killed my King ?

Honour is somewhat ? Aye, honour is all,
And little is got by this hangman's deed;
But whether the merit be great or small,
Childless and wifeless, wherefore should I heed ?

For my fair bride died with her babe divine
At Colchester leaguer beyond the sea,
And I am the last of my ancient line:
Honour, dishonour,—all passes with me.

But now in the meantime my life is left
To do what I will with, my arm is long,
And my eye is clear, and my hand is deft,
And I hate the men that have done this wrong,

That have killed God's King for a lawyer's lie,
That have rent God's Church for a rabble's whim;
The blood they have spilled and their blasphemy
Smokes up like a furnace always to Him.

And ye, what are ye to babble and prate
Of pity to me ? Ye are outlaws too,
And the iron bond of the exile's hate
Should bind us together, both me and you.

For the robber sits in our fathers' halls;
By the tyrant's ban we are landless men.
Ye will fight, ye say, when the trumpet calls;
I also shall not be the hindmost then.

But now, since the battle is not arrayed,
And the kites must wait for a larger meal,
I kill as I may, without leave or aid,
Save this in the scabbard that smites my heel.

THE EXILE (1650)

LADY, for thy word I thank thee, thou has spoke me
passing fair,
Jesu grant me to walk worthy of a love I may not
share!
For I know full many a gallant would have held it
half divine
To have won from such as thou art such a love as this
of thine.

But beyond the shadowy mountains and beyond the
echoing sea
Stands my own dear country fairer far than this fair
Italy,
Stands my home amid the meadows where the lazy
cattle lie,
And the oaks are round about it, and the river runs
thereby.

There from out a green old garden smiles a daughter
of our race,
Through the ivory gates of slumber nightly look I on
her face,
Framed in light brown English tresses, jewell'd with
soft, grey English eyes,
Windows of a noble spirit, mirrors of our northern
skies.

Even so it was I left her in the opening world of spring,
Riding blithely through the river, riding northwards
to the King,
And though earth and sea divide us, still there is a
Heaven above,
Still my hand is for my master and my heart is for my
love.

AT MAESTRICHT

In 1673 Louis XIV, assisted by Vauban, besieged Maestricht. The Duke of Monmouth, John Churchill (afterwards the great Marlborough) and many other Englishmen, served in the French Army. A nocturnal assault upon the counter-scarp, delivered under Monmouth's direction, resulted in the capture of a demi-lune before the Tongres Gate. At noon on the ensuing day the Dutch made a sortie, and recovered the demi-lune. Monmouth and Churchill, followed by twelve gentlemen of the English Life Guard and a handful of English volunteers, dashed across the open under a heavy fire and entered the works sword in hand. Supported by Louis' Musketeers, they expelled the Dutch after a severe struggle, in which Churchill saved Monmouth's life and was himself wounded, and d'Artagnan—Dumas' d'Artagnan—was killed.

LIFE GUARDS of England, Musketeers of France,
D'Artagnan, Monmouth, Churchill, side by side,
Oh, the brave fellowship, the foul mischance !—
Tread softly here, for here d'Artagnan died.

Without the mouldering wall, the vanished gate,
The broken bastion, and the moat sun-dried,
Still stands the demi-lune most desolate,—
Tread softly here, for here d'Artagnan died.

If you have followed fortune, riding post,
Fame for your spur, and beauty for your guide,
If you have boasted, and outdone your boast,—
Tread softly here, for here d'Artagnan died.

If you have thrilled beneath a woman's touch,
If you have told her truth, if you have lied,
If you have loved too many or too much,—
Tread softly here, for here d'Artagnan died.

If you have freely squandered, feasted, quaffed,
 Marched, starved, and fought with comrades true
 and tried,
If you have looked death in the eyes, and laughed,—
 Tread softly here, for here d'Artagnan died.

Lovers of love, and lovers of good wine,
 Great fighters all, great ladies in your pride,
All dreamers of delicious dreams and fine,—
 Tread softly here, for here d'Artagnan died.

AN EXPRESS FROM HIS GRACE

“Whitehall, August 10.

“This Afternoon, Colonel Park, Aid de Camp to His Grace the Duke of Marlborough, arrived here, being sent express by the Duke to Her Majesty, with an Account of the Glorious Victory wherewith Almighty God had blessed Her Majesty’s Arms over the French and Bavarians near Hochstetten, above Donawert, the 13th Instant, N.S.

“The Colonel brought a letter to my Lady Dutchess, which His Grace had written on horseback with a Lead-Pencil ; a copy whereof follows :

“August 13, 1704.

“I have not time to say more than to beg of you to present my humble duty to the Queen, and to let her Majesty know that Her Army has had a Glorious Victory ; Monsieur Tallard, and Two other Generals, are in my Coach, and I am following the rest : The Bearer, my Aid de Camp, Collonel Park, will give her Majesty an Account of what has passed : I shall do it in a day or two by another more at large.

“MARLBOROUGH”*

“The Duke of Marlborough had been sixteen hours on Horseback, and was in pursuit of the Enemy when this Express came away.”—The LONDON GAZETTE, from Thursday, August 10, to Monday, August 14, 1704.”

* The original of this letter is still preserved at Blenheim Palace.

I

Up, up from the South, where the land is red,
And the Danube is choked with the drifting dead,
All drabbed with dust, all dappled with foam,
I gallop, and gallop, and gallop for home.
Oh, little the folks in Old England dream
What old England hath done by the Danube stream !
What will they think of it, what will they say of it,
Lord ! when I tell them the right gallant way of it ?
Horses and highways are all one to me,
So that they carry me straight to the sea;
Then saddle your bay,
Or saddle your gray,
Chestnut or sorrel, and show me the way !

II

'Twas daylight still when I rode from His Grace,
And still he was urging the pitiless chase;
But I know we had taken fifty guns,
And colours by hundreds, and baggage by tons;
Captains and Colonels were ours in plenty,
We had taken battalions, eight and twenty,
And I know (for I saw him like one in a trance),
We had taken a Marshal, a Marshal of France.
Horses and highways are all one to me, etc.

III

The Queen shall learn, what I saw with my eyes,
That they bore them like men, did the High Allies,
Hesse and Brandenburg, Dutchman and Dane,
And the pride of them all was the Prince Eugene;
But the Queen shall know, and England shall know
That my Lord Duke of Marlborough hath struck this
blow,
And the first in the field and the foremost by yards
Were Her Majesty's Line and Her Majesty's Guards.
Horses and highways are all one to me, etc.

IV

I weary not galloping, day nor night;
I dream in my saddle, I dream of the fight,—
The red line stepping as if on parade
Till they shivered their steel on the barbed stockade,
And the great charge splashing across the rill,
And crushing and flashing up over the hill,
With His Grace to the fore, riding easy and gay,—
When the proud Duchess hears of it, what will she
say?
Horses and highways are all one to me, etc.

V

There were nine young regiments athwart our track,
That held by their colours and never looked back;
In their ranks as they stood I saw them lie,
Nine regiments of French boys that knew how to
die;
There were thirty squadrons of *corps d'elite*;
That were easily first in the mad retreat,
They left the nine regiments alone in the slaughter,
But they perished like dogs in the Danube water.
Horses and highways are all one to me, etc.

VI

I swing through the slumbering towns and dark,
And the cobble-stones flash and the house-dogs bark,
And the Germans roll from their drowsy beds,
But I never get sight of their night-capped heads;
Away and away, through the silent land
Till the sun flushes up, and the teams are spanned,
And out in the wheat-fields the women cry, "Master,
A kiss for your news," but I gallop the faster.
Horses and highways are all one to me, etc.

VII

Come up then, come up ! With a flying rein
I raced over Neckar, I raced over Main;
The Rhine and the Meuse, they are far behind,
I can smell the great sea and the good, salt wind.
Come up then, come up ! With a homeward breeze,
And the pick of the ships by the Dutchmen's quays,
I shall saddle again ere the long day be spent,
I shall gallop again, and in Essex or Kent.

Horses and highways are all one to me, etc.

VIII

At Canterbury, in God's good keeping,
Edward, the stalwart Black Prince, lies a-sleeping;
At Westminster, high in Saint Peter's there
Is the helmet of Agincourt, hanging fair;
And the soul of England, they thought it dust,
And the sword of England, they thought it but
rust,—

What will they think of it, what will they say of it,
Lord ! when I tell them the right gallant way of it ?

Horses and highways are all one to me,
So that they carry me straight to the sea;

Then saddle your bay,
Or saddle your gray,
Chestnut or sorrel, and show me the way !

AUDENARDE

HE was round and ruby-faced, he was belted, frogged,
and laced,

And he stood just four feet nine;
I can almost see him now, with his jolly tow-row-row,
And his drumsticks twinkling fine;
Through St. James's and the "Mell," how he used to
strut and swell

To the changing of the guard,—
But they said he stepped his proudest, and they said
he drummed his loudest,
When they went to Audenarde.

They had fifteen miles to make, and the brimming
Scheldt to take,
Ere they brought the French to bay;
But he finished like a winner, though he went without
his dinner,

And he drummed it all the way;
As they waded through the sedges, as they scrambled
through the hedges,
And the fight grew hot and hard,
Not for all the bullets humming would he stop his
jaunty drumming,
When they went to Audenarde.

He was seen amid the flashes, he was heard above the
crashes,

He was first in each attack;
But they looked for him in vain in the darkness and
the rain,

When they came to bivouac;
He was lying in the daisies, with his drum-head shot
to blazes,

And one chubby cheek all scarred,—
He had died for good Queen Anne like a valiant
English man,

When they went to Audenarde.

So they laid him by the Scheldt , in his epaulettes and
belt,
With his drum-sticks in his hands ;
And we shall not see him now, with his jolly tow-row-
row,
When the old battalion lands ;
Through St. James's and the "Mell," he will no more
strut and swell
To the changing of the guard,
For with every step he trod, he was marching up to God,
When they went to Audenarde.

AT MALPLAQUET

"The Battle of Malplaquet" (September 11, 1709), "one of the bloodiest ever fought by mortal men. Little is known of the details of the fighting, these being swallowed up in the shades of the forest. All that is certain is that neither side gave quarter, and that the combat was not only fierce but savage."—Hon. J. W. Fortescue: A HISTORY OF THE BRITISH ARMY, vol. i., p. 525.

It is very still and cold in the wood,
In the wood by Blaregnies,
But the smell of the earth is rich and good,
And the grass grows strong and free.

Beyond and away on the slanting field,
Where the lily banners blew,
Where the gay Guards broke and the "Household"
reeled,
And the scarlet horse drove through,

The labourer sings in the fallow ways,
And the tinkling streamlets run,
And the face of the land is all ablaze
With the brave September sun.

But here in the wood it is still and cold,
In the wood by Blaregnies,
And the silent dead deep under the mould,
How still and how cold they be !

Oh ! pray for the souls of them that are not,
Tread soft in the tangled brake,
And down in the dell where the red leaves rot
Speak low for the dead men's sake;

For the dead men's sake that grappled, and swayed,
And stumbled, and stabbed, and slashed
Over fosse and fence, through thicket and glade,
While the round balls ripped and crashed,

Till the tall trees rocked in the tortured air,
And the leaves fell parched and sere,
And the timid creatures that harboured there
Fled forth in a panic fear;

And nobody knows if the deeds they did
Were fitter for praise or blame;
The splendour of valour itself was hid,
And the nameless things of shame.

There were those that whimpered and those that
cursed,
There were those that prayed to die,
And the frenzied laugh, and the moan of thirst,
And the scream of agony,

In a myriad murmur of pains and fears,
From the dark grove rose and fell,
As calls to the sorrowing angels' ears
The sob of the sea of hell.

There was blood in the ruts of trampled mud,
There was blood on root and bough,
And coppice and covert ran red with blood,—
They are green and glossy now.

It is very still and cold in the wood,
In the wood by Blaregnies,
But the smell of the earth is rich and good,
And the grass grows strong and free.

DAPPER GEORGE (1743)

"...Dapper George...a man of valour."—THACKERAY.
"No fear in him ;...like England itself."—CARLYLE.

Dapper King George, he was round and red,
With a German tongue in his pig-tailed head;
But Dapper King George was a fighter grim
With some English blood at the heart of him,
And a man of wrath, and a man of his fists,
And a wrecker of orthodox strategists.

Oh, George the Second, he played the King,
As soon as the bullets began to sing;
You ought to have seen him at Dettingen,
You ought to have heard how he cheered his men;
When the judge is set, and the books are reckoned,
There's Dettingen down to King George the Second.

Forty-four thousand with Dapper George,
We were pinned like rats in a filthy gorge,
Jammed up in a gin, which the mountains made
With a broad-backed river too deep to wade,—
An army behind and an army before,
And the great, grinning guns on the farther shore.

Oh, George the Second, he played the King, etc.

Forty-four thousand of hungry men,
We cursed and we swore in that Daniel's den;
And Dapper King George blasphemed with the worst,
And Dapper King George in the field was first,
When we wheeled into line in our scarlet coats,
And fell on like the fiend at the Frenchmen's throats.

Oh, George the Second, he played the King, etc.

He called us brothers, he called us sons, ·
He levelled the muskets, he laid the guns,
And he jeered and cheered and sweated and swore,
Till his charger ran from the cannon's roar;
Then he cursed such cattle for cowardly brutes,
And he led us afoot in his big jack-boots.

Oh, George the Second, he played the King, etc.

We shattered their prancing Musketeers,
We scattered their capering Carabineers;
We played the deuce with the pick of their line,
And their Foot Guards rushed like the herd of swine
Plump into the river-mud, head over heels,
To sup on the weeds with the gudgeon and eels.

Oh, George the Second, he played the King, etc.

The Greys and the Royals took each a flag.
And four brass cannon we clapped in our bag;
And Dapper King George, having then and there
Dubbed Trooper Tom Browne and the Earl of Stair
Knights-Banneret both, like a King and a winner,
Sat down on the ground to a cold-mutton dinner.

Oh, George the Second, he played the King,
As soon 'as the bullets began to sing;
You ought to have seen him at Dettingen,
You ought to have heard how he cheered his men;
When the judge is set, and the books are reckoned,
There's Dettingen down to King George the Second.

· MINDEN DRUMS

(AUGUST 1, 1759)

Respectfully dedicated to the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of the Suffolk Regiment, the Lancashire Fusiliers, the Royal Welch Fusiliers, the King's Own Scottish Borderers, the Hampshire Regiment, and the King's Own (the Yorkshire Light Infantry), being the 12th, 20th, 23rd, 25th, 37th, and 51st of the Line.

Do you never think of Minden and the old and
gallant Line,
When you hear the drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub ?
They were six red-coated regiments with their pig-
tails mighty fine,
The regiments that so gaily took the rub,
(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);
It was Ferdinand of Brunswick, and he said, "When
you advance,
You shall set your drums a-rolling,"—but they saw
the troops of France,
And they took it that his Highness called on them
to lead the dance,
And they set their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

Oh, they never looked behind them for support,
reserve, or aid,
When they set their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub;
But because the ground in front of them invited a
parade,
So bare it was of boulder or of shrub,
(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub),

Out they stepped upon it briskly, while the guns
began to bark,
They were six red-coated regiments, and they made
a goodly mark,
But they kept their files as steady as in old
St. James's Park,
And they kept their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

In this posture they proceeded nigh three quarters
of a mile,
While they kept their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

Till eleven jingling squadrons cantered out in
haughty style,
Th' infatuated islanders to drub,

(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);
Oh, we saw their guidons tossing, and we heard their
trumpets sound,
And we halted with precision, and the sergeants
bustled round,
And we volleyed at ten paces, and we blew them off
the ground,—
And we kept our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

Then we cheerfully continued in good order on our
course,

And they heard our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub,
And with snortings and with curvetings their fresh,
unbroken horse

Pranced down the British bullock-heads to drub,
(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);
And their foot marched up on either wing our
tactics to confound,
Marched Aquitaine, marched old Touraine,—but
the sergeants bustled round,

And we volleyed at ten paces, and we blew them off
the ground,—

And we kept our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

Then smartly we stepped off anew, while the great
guns galled us sore,

But they heard our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub,

And their carbineers and cuirassiers with strange
blaspheming swore,

This insular stupidity to drub,

(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);

Now in all King Louis' armies were no fighters more
renowned,

And they rode hard, and they rode straight,—but
the sergeants bustled round,

And we volleyed at ten paces, and we blew them off
the ground,—

And we kept our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

Then it was the Prince of Condé, and he thought it
bitter shame

Still to hear our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub;

He was born the great-great-grandson of a captain
of great fame,

And, Lord ! he was a sturdy lion's cub,

(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);

They were sixty reeling squadrons, but they rallied
to him well,

And like the devil upon our front, upon our flanks
he fell;

But right and left we faced about, and we blasted
him to hell,—

So we kept our drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub, rub-
a-dub.

Now these six red-coated regiments were all gaiter,
stock, and starch,
(Can't you hear their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub ?),
Like a box of wooden soldiers made to march and
countermarch,
To polish and to pipeclay and to scrub,
(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);
They were animated ramrods, they were automatic
planks,
And noodles all were the officers, and boobies were
the ranks,
But they broke eight thousand cavalry with cannon
on its flanks,*
And they kept their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

Do you never think of Minden and the old and
gallant Line,
When you hear the drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub ?
They were six red-coated regiments with their pig-
tails mighty fine,
The regiments that so gaily took the rub,
(rub-a-dub, rub-a-dub);
They were George the Second's soldiers, they were
worthy of their Prince,
(In the famous fight at Dettingen no Frenchman saw
him wince),
Like the men that were before them, like the men that
have been since,
They could keep their drums a-rolling, rub-a-dub,
rub-a-dub.

* "*Si je ne l'avais pas vu, je ne le croirais pas.*"—The Maréchal de Contades to the Maréchal de Belle-Isle.

OCTOBER 21, 1905

(TRAFALGAR CENTENARY)

"Greater Love Hath no Man"

DEAD days, dead, famous days and fair,
They come to us in this keen air
And noontide's golden haze,
The old October days,—

When Europe like some wide-wayed camp
Rang with the Corsican's strong tramp,
And those twin fleets hawklike
Hung poised to swoop and strike.

Once, only once, such night-time gloomed
Round England, when the Armada loomed
Up from the wild south-west,
Big with Rome's black behest,

What time the war-lord Parma's bands
Bristled along the Belgic sands,
Sacker of cities, he,
Baulked by the narrow sea.

Then scarce had England dealt her stroke
Before the Lord of Lightnings spoke,
And beat their haughty decks
To helmless, heaving wrecks.

Not so, when Nelson's shattering roar
Startled the Andalusian shore,—
For him no planets fought,
And no storm-angels wrought;

Only he prayed awhile, and then
Sent that high message to his men,
A very voice from home,
Over the flying foam;

And turned to watch with kindling sight
His great ships streaming to the fight,
 Crowding for foremost place,
 Exultant in the race,—

Leviathan and *Temeraire*,
With *Royal Sovereign* leading there,
 Mars and *Bellerophon*,—
 How greatly they came on !

Till swift on those confederate Powers
He crashed, and in five burning hours
 Of close and closer fight
 Scattered our brooding night;

While softly to his dying ears,
Peal upon peal, the rapturous cheers
 Drifted across the swell,
 Sweet as a marriage bell.

And now, when autumn smiles and sighs,
Men talk of him with shining eyes,
 And of his radiant end
 As of a gentle friend.

OCTOBER 21

"Quid debeas, O Roma, Neronibus"

You who oppress the hireling in his wage,
And you small upstart tyrannies that band
To check the strong man's toil; you who withstand
The just reform, you panders who engage
To right the wrong by voted brigandage;
You loud detractors of your native land,
You ineffectual braggarts,—hold your hand,
Seal up your noise, and curb your ruinous rage
About his silent grave to whom you owe
That you have tongues to praise or to complain,
Classes to grind and laws to overthrow,
That any thought or action doth remain
To you this day, or aught save that last woe,
To crouch and whine and gnaw the foreign chain.

MARSHAL VORWÄRTS

“Blücher’s loyalty saved the cause of Europe.”

—Major General SIR J. F. MAURICE, K.C.B.

HERE’S to him who, bruised and ill,
Wrote from Wavre, “Come I will !”
Gneisenau said yea and nay,
He would go and he would stay ;
Vorwärts scarce could sit his steed,
Vorwärts marched in England’s need;
He was two and seventy then,—
Here’s to him and all his men !

Bülow’s corps is fresh for fight;
Bülow leads, but rear and right,
Corps of Pirch and corps of Ziethen,
Battered, famished, but unbeaten,
Up the height and down the hollow,
On from Wavre follow, follow;
Thunder, growling far away,
Tells where England stands at bay.

Westward through the drenched lanes faring,
Grimly went they, sweating, swearing,
Deeper still in mire and muck,
Till the batteries sank and stuck,
Gun-teams floundering to the knees,
Gun-wheels to the axle-trees,
And the men sat down and sobbed,
While the thunder swelled and throbbed.

Blood-red spur, and eyes ablaze,
Blücher rode the trampled ways,—
“Hundert Teufel ! what is here ?”
But they answered, “Father dear,
Can thy children thrust and flog
Through this barbarous, Belgian bog ?
Half the guns to hell are gone;
Father dear, we can’t get on.”

“Can’t get on ? But yonder,—hark !
Hear ye not the bulldog’s bark ?
Shall the Engländers allege
That your Father broke his pledge ?
Shame it were, if that should be !
Children, children, follow me !
I am sworn to Wellington,—
Sapperment ! We must get on.”

Thus he spake: and panting, steaming,
Hugely heaving and blaspheming,
On his batteries lurched and rumbled,
On his columns reeled and stumbled;
But from Wavre Thielmann wrote,
“I have Grouchy at my throat.
Backward here the game’s begun,
And the odds are two to one.”

“Two to one,” quoth Vorwärts. “So !
Donnerwetter ! it will go,
If, bei Gott, till close of day,
Thielmann hold them all in play ;
But we cannot help him there,
Not one sabre can we spare;
What though Thielmann stand or fall,
Yon’s the great game, forward all !”

Came a redcoat, racing through,—
“What, in God’s name, what are you?”
“Black Hussars that ride before
Graf von Bülow’s army corps;
Back to Wavre, miles on miles,
You shall find his sweltering files,—
Hark! they roll the Prussian drums!
Courage! Father Blücher comes!”

Forward all! And Bülow drove
Right upon Plancenoit, and strove
Hour by hour of blood and flame,
Hour by hour, till Ziethen came,
Storming in upon Papelotte,
Storming in with steel and shot;
Then, as flared the sinking sun,
England struck,—and it was done.

Such was Vorwärts, such a fighter,
Such a lunging, plunging smiter,
Always staunch and always straight,
Strong as death for love or hate,
Always first in foulest weather,
Neck or nothing, hell for leather,
Through or over, sink or swim,
Such was Vorwärts,—here’s to him!

Note.—Before 1914 the then Prince Blücher, like Lord Roberts, tried to awaken England to the German menace. Such evidence of inherited loyalty to Wellington’s England it may have been which prompted Frank Taylor to write this tribute to the forbear’s share in the crucial contest of Waterloo. The grandson of this Prince Blücher, a British subject, and son to Count Lothair Blücher has been killed in North Africa in the Spring of 1943 fighting for the King Emperor, George VI.

THE VETERAN

BENT-SHOULDERED, withered, wellnigh blind,
By a rude, oaken staff supported,
A pedlar's wallet slung behind,
Stocked with cheap baubles, well assorted,
He totters by; and who should know
Him for the lad, with ardour thrilling,
Who sixty crowded years ago,
Ruddy and stalwart, "took the shilling" ?

'Twas back in "Coronation year,"
In '38 that he enlisted,
When work was scarce and bread was dear,
And God knows how the poor existed;
Commissions from the Crown were bought,
Which now are purchased from the "crammer";
We marched and drank and swore and fought
With old Brown Bess's flint and hammer.

The service then,—oh, truth is rare,—
Was nigh as black as now 'tis painted;
Rations were scant, and pay was spare,
And men were flogged until they fainted;
I've seen him smile when he had read
Of soldier's rights and fiddle-faddles;
He thinks that regiment's overfed,
Which takes to carving up its saddles.

Down Alma's ridge, with steadfast look,
He saw the Russian bayonets quiver;
His leg still bears the scar it took
On the red slope that crowns the river;
And when their dread, supreme attack,
That dun, November dawn rolled round us,
Those outworn arms were nothing slack
To cleave the fierce, grey flood that bound us.

He scorns to make his "case" the hint
And text for some seditious gabble,
To vend it to some scurril print,
Or full-fed pander of the rabble;
He scorns to whimper, or implore
Our alms with whinings and grimacings;
But once he wept that his old corps
Should change the colour of its facings.

His country starves him like a cur,
And stints him of her boundless treasure,
Who gave his youth and strength to her,
Nor doled his blood with niggard measure;
Ah, brave, dim eyes, brave, patient form,
That daily grows more gaunt and sparer,
A rest remaineth from the storm,
A greater country and a fairer.

JUNE 22, 1897
(*Diamond Jubilee*)

SMILE, sun, on England's day of days
When up the blossom-laden ways
Of this most ancient seat
Her peoples throng to greet

The best-loved child of Alfred's race,
Mistress and mother, face to face,
While heaven's high bosom swells,
Smit with their jangling bells.

Like stubborn oaks on either side
The unshaken spears of England ride,
And for her chiefest boast,
With this her island host,

Good horse by horse and knee by knee
Goes that imperial chivalry,
That rivulet of steel,
Which round her realm doth wheel.

Smile, sun, and to our smiles conform;
Shine or shine not, our hearts are warm,
Beating in unison
With millions as with one,

Who, wheresoe'er her blazons drift,
This day the triple shout shall lift,
Cleaving the void immense
Above five continents;

And wheresoe'er two English go,
By quenchless waste or deathless snow,
Strong hand in hand they link,
And like tall sea-kings drink,

With wassail and with revellings,
The daughter of their fifty kings;*
And in these sea-born isles,
Miles upon boundless miles,

From hill to hill this happy night
Shall leap the long, exultant light,
As of old time it leapt,
When Philip's galleons swept

Up Channel, charged with bull and ban;
Northward the hot night riders ran,
Shrilling with fiery breath,
"God and Elizabeth!"

So now from every bluff and steep
This night like, burning tongues shall leap,
And from their beamy cars
Shall stoop the astonished stars.

Smile, sun, on us who in new years,
Smiling shall say in other ears,
"We saw what you but read;
Oh, we have lived indeed!"

* A Survivor's narrative of the wreck of the P. & O. steamer *Aden*, published in the *Times* of July 17, 1897, contained a remarkable illustration of the accuracy of these lines. "On the 22nd," it says, "the Jubilee Day, the survivors toasted the Queen in their small rations."

CIVIS ROMANUS SUM !

"What has New Zealand to do with the internal affairs of the Transvaal?"—DAILY CHRONICLE, September 29, 1899.

"WHY should the children cross the flood,
Why muster at the mother's call ?"
If there be found of her own blood
To question why, then God mend all !
How shall the stranger learn, unless
Through agony and sharpest stress.

How shall the stranger learn ? Too long
Maltreated by a mulish race,
Her sons, grown sick of shame and wrong,
Recalled their gentle mother's face;
They cried to her; she heard their cry
With parted lips and straining eye.

One saith, "Their hearts and arms are weak,
They follow basely after gain,
Tardy to strike but swift to shriek,
Degenerate from their mother's strain."
It may be; but beyond the rest
The mother loves her weakest best.

Therefore she girdeth up her gown,
And calls the children to her side,
Not to win wealth or red renown,
(Her fame is fair, her fields are wide);
But you who wronged her feeblest son,
Look to yourselves,—your day is done.

THE MEN THAT LEAD (1899-1902)

GIVE ear to the song of the sword-girt men who glory
in steel and steed,
The chant of the cunning and cool in fight, the lay of
the men that lead.

Gentle and noble and Royal are they, but commoner,
prince, and lord,
Hard as the hands of a labouring man are the hands
that hold the sword;

Gentle and noble and Royal are they, but they can
strip to the shirt,
And take their share with the simple and rude of
sweat and travail and dirt;

They have dainty beds in their splendid homes, rich
viands and vintage rare,
And their lady-loves and their lady-wives are delicate
dames and fair;

Yet they munch at a crust of mouldy bread, and drink
from a stagnant dyke,
They sleep on the turf while it blows and rains and the
foe creeps up to strike,

They feed on the dream of a far-off face while a rival
freely woos,—
And all of those things they do out of love, and only
because they choose;

Aye, all of these things they do out of love, because
they were formed and fed,
The sons of such mothers as Sparta trained, the sons
of the men that led;

Spartan they in their obstinate valour and Spartan in
pride of race,
And Spartan they in their terrible scorn of the coward's
quivering face;

Because they were boys in the schools that forge and
weld the best of the breed,
Brave boys in the schools that are schools for men,
hard schools for men that lead;

Because they are hunters and riders, and rovers of
river and heath,
Because they are swifter than eagle's wings and
stronger than lion's teeth;

Because they have names that they dare not dim, and
names that they dare excel,
And the valiant dead have a thousand eyes to watch
if they quit them well.

What wonder we follow the sword-girt men ? What
wonder we rise and run
From the shop and the slum and the furrow to ride
with the six-horse gun,

To shoot with the rifle, to wield the steel, to learn the
use of the lance ?
When the trumpets and bugles pipe to us, what wonder
we rise and dance,

And follow the leaders, the sword-girt men, and learn
to obey from these,
Who have learned from the day of their birth to do
the things that others please;

Who are peers with us in the ancient games that have
made our people great;
Who are kin with us by the chance of blood in this
old, free-wedding state;

Whose fathers fast by our fathers of yore, baron and
billman and bowman,
Rapier and musket and pike together, shattered and
trampled the foeman,—

What wonder we follow them gladly, madly, and fear-
lessly and far ?
We would follow them through the fires of Hell because
they are what they are,

The gentle and graceful, the wise in war, the first and
the most to bleed,—
Be he white or yellow or brown or black, who follows
the men that lead,

His heart shall be as the heart of an oak, his might as
the might of ten,
For the shout of a king is in their camp who follow the
sword-girt men.

APRIL 19

HE is not dead, if unforgotten still

Of that great-hearted England whom he led
Not to forget herself. He is not dead,
If she be high and happy. And should God will
That she go down, by banded fraud and skill,
And might of emulous empires compasséd,
If she make earth and sea her dying bed,
And the rent world her monumental hill,

He is not dead. But when her blood runs slow,
And chills for fear at every fiery breath

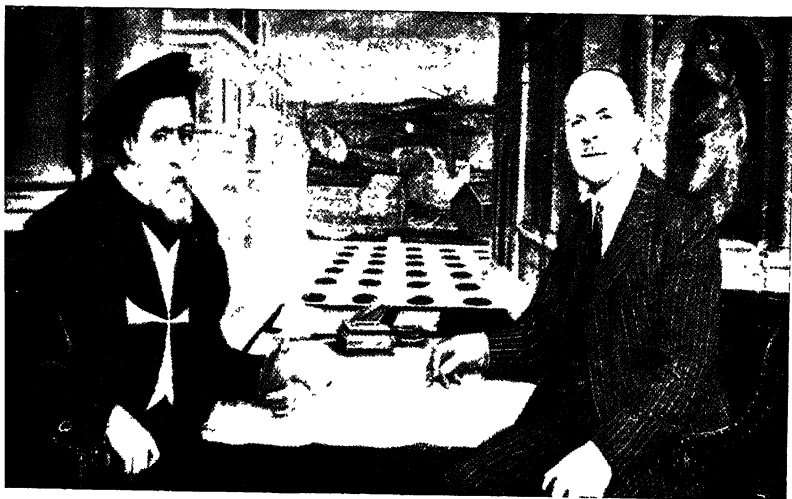
Of braggart peoples, when to 'void the blow,
She waits on every word armed Europe saith,
Content to buy and sell,—then shall ye know
Him dead indeed, and fortunate in his death.

CAPITULATION

WHAT are those tremulous hands, those heads that bow,
Those bright blades snapped in twain ?
Those are the captains, breaking here and now
Their swords without a stain.

What are those tall, grey men that stand and weep
Over a new dug grave ?
Those are the stubborn sergeants, burying deep
The banners of the brave.

What are those myriad shadows, drifting afar
Like sad souls unaneled ?
Those are the old bands, seamed with many a scar,
Filing from their last field.



LA VALLETTE & LORD GORT: DEFENDERS OF MALTA
Two exponents of the Gallant Way whom four centuries do not keep apart.

Reproduced from the 'Household Brigade Magazine.' The original painting with a figure, possibly Don Garcia de Toledo, Viceroy of Sicily, in the chair now occupied by Lord Gort, passed by sale, about ten years ago but its whereabouts are unknown to the writer.

A photograph of the painting exists in the iconographical files at the Chancery of the Order of the Knights Hospitaller of St. John of Jerusalem in St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, London.



IN 1565 Sulaiman the Magnificent, Sultan of Turkey and Terror of Europe, mounted a prodigious assault on Malta. In Europe his armies were as far West as Hungary : but at sea the Knights of St. John, under their Grand Master La Valette, denied him control of the Mediterranean.

So resolutely were his great assaults repelled and his famous engineers foiled, that the fighting became an active siege and lasted throughout the summer of 1565. Early in September La Valette was still rejecting summonses to surrender, though no reasonable hope of survival now remained. On the final morning, which otherwise could only have proved fatal to the defence, the relieving fleet of Don Garcia de Toledo, the Spanish Viceroy of Sicily, was seen approaching.

General Sir William Dobbie, Governor of Malta 1940-42, has emphatically asserted that the memory of the 1565 Epic Defence has steeled Malta to survive the Axis assaults in the present war.

* - * . * *

It is generally forgotten that in the pre-revolutionary ages of Faith an international police force could function successfully for 700 years. First on Levantine roads, then in the whole Mediterranean, the Knights of St. John kept down piracy and became one of the principal maritime powers until, in 1798, their first and only German Grand Master, von Hompesch, yielded Malta to General Buonaparte without a fight.

The members of the Order came from different nations, and surrendered their worldly position, goods, career, for the prestige of a life of devoted service in the Gallant Way : namely strong action against predatory forces combined with gentle care for the defenceless, the wounded and the sick.

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